



Publications

North Carolina-based small presses and magazines may be eligible for Program Support funding to help with production, promotion, and readership engagement costs.

Like other projects, artistic merit is the primary criterion with publication projects. And like other projects, the choice of writer(s) and the content of the proposed work(s) should make sense in the context of the publisher or magazine's mission. How the writer is compensated and how he or she is involved in promotion or education prior or subsequent to publication are key elements of a strong proposal.

Every small press and literary magazine wants to sell copies because they want readers to engage with the writers' work. This is no different from any other literary event or activity that may sell tickets to hear authors read or talk about their work. The difference is that, unlike festivals or reading series, book sales or magazine subscriptions are spread out over time and space, making the benefit trickier to track and assign to a geographic location. Still, it is part of the applicant's burden to provide the panel with estimates and relevant historical information to show where its readership comes from and how it plans to reach new readers in North Carolina.

There are other ways, however, for publishers to connect with readers and communities in North Carolina. Publishers may engage in cross-disciplinary collaborations with other community organizations to introduce the publication to new readers. In conjunction with their publication by a funded press or journal, authors may make appearances at bookstores, conduct local writing workshops, appear at literary festivals, and appear at book clubs and local reading groups, among other activities. Thoughtful projects in the applicant's community which engender connections, collaborations, and long-term relationships are more competitive than author tours that string together unrelated events in multiple venues and cities.

While it may be hard to accurately predict who ultimately will participate, it's important to be able to describe your audience goals and how you intend to pursue them. The content of the work or the background of the author may present opportunities to partner with community organizations with an interest in the publication's subject matter and open up the potential for new readership and fruitful collaborations.

Publications may use portions of grants in support of production fees. Publications which are strictly online, with no physical printing, also may be eligible for program support. In such cases, demonstrating how you measure audience, how you know where your online audience comes from, what strategies you pursue to attract North Carolina audiences, and what in-person activities you will be undertaking, will play a prominent role in making your application more competitive.

Supporting materials and work samples are an important part of your application. These might include, but are not limited to, biographies/résumés of authors, excerpts of their writing, reviews of recent publications or of the press in general, and feedback from previous workshop attendees.